United Nations S/PV.4579 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4579th meeting

Friday, 19 July 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Sir Jeremy Greenstock	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Banoum
	China	Mr. Jiang Jiang
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mrs. d'Achon
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. McFeely
	Mauritius	Ms. Rehault
	Mexico	Mr. Ponce Guadian
	Norway	Mr. Dammen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Mirov
	Singapore	Ms. Foo
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenblatt

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2002/737)

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02-48740 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3 p.m.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Tajikistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, allow me to associate myself with the warm words of gratitude expressed today to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, for his devotion to the cause of implementing the peace process in Afghanistan and his wise and skilful leadership of the United Nations Mission in that country. In Tajikistan, which under the aegis of the United Nations was in a short period of time able to resolve an internal conflict, we understand very well the important role that can be played by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General in finding a formula for peace and national reconciliation. Although many complex tasks remain to be completed by the Afghan people, with the assistance of the international community, we commend Ambassador Brahimi and his colleagues for achieving substantive results across the board in all areas of the Mission he heads.

Today's meeting is further testimony of the extent to which the Security Council — which under the Charter of the United Nations bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — is interested in a peaceful, stable, united, neutral and harmoniously developing Afghanistan, a country whose valiant people are gradually coming to life after many years of governance under the anti-popular Taliban regime.

We in Tajikistan have also been following very carefully the developments in neighbouring Afghanistan. We have been earnestly hoping that the fraternal people of Afghanistan would be able to overcome the obstacles on the path towards national reconciliation and unity. We are profoundly pleased that, despite all the complexities of the recent past, the Interim Administration and the Special Independent Commission were able to convene the Emergency Loya Jirga, which was a truly major event in the renaissance of Afghan society.

What was of critical importance was that the high-level assembly — which brought together full-fledged delegates from all corners of war-torn Afghanistan — was able to deal with the tasks before it: to elect a head of State and to set up a broad-based Transitional Authority. Many efforts led to the successful convening of the Loya Jirga. Particularly important was the contribution of the delegates — and especially of the women among them — and the atmosphere of trust and openness that prevailed. It is a good thing that, despite the many differences in Afghan society, its representatives recognize their responsibility for the fate of the new post-Taliban Afghanistan.

The lessons of the peace process in Tajikistan have demonstrated that without an understanding of the need to forget existing differences it is impossible to attain national unity or to restore genuine peace and stability in a country. The Government of Tajikistan is optimistic about, and supportive of, the positive processes that are gaining strength in Afghanistan. It will continue to extend all possible assistance to the Loya Jirga and the widely representative and multi-ethnic Government headed by Hamid Karzai.

Every week, convoys carrying international humanitarian assistance travel along the transport corridors that have been opened across the Tajik border to reach Afghan provinces. The Government of Tajikistan will be increasing both its humanitarian contributions and its rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan.

We are grateful to the Afghan President and Administration for continuing to implement the Bonn Agreement. We wish them every success in bringing all Afghans together under a united national platform guaranteeing peace and stability in all the provinces of Afghanistan, as well as in restoring the economy and achieving successes in the social sphere. That will require maximum efforts, boldness and firmness.

The recent past has shown us that the Government of Hamid Karzai is resolved to build a viable new political system in Afghanistan in which there is no place for international terrorists or narcotics dealers. Tajikistan expresses the hope that, under the continued leading role of the United Nations, the efforts being made in the Afghanistan settlement will be supported by the international community in order to consolidate the positive trends that are gaining momentum in Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, to whom the

Council extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Lamani (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this official meeting to consider the prevailing situation in Afghanistan in the light of the report prepared by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, which was drafted following some positive developments in the situation. However, that situation continues to be somewhat tense, and a number of dangers remain. We therefore need to continue our tireless efforts to ensure the establishment of a State in Afghanistan and to ensure peace and stability, in particular following the successful meeting of the Emergency Loya Jirga, held from 11 to 19 June, which elected a president, approved infrastructures and established the Transitional Authority.

The report of the Secretary-General refers to the fact that, although the peace process has been slow since the Bonn Conference, all the measures announced in the Bonn Agreement have been implemented in the time frames provided. That has been done despite difficulties and numerous security, political, humanitarian and constitutional obstacles, as well as the ravages of civil war and the terrible chaos in Afghanistan. In the light of the impact of this chaos on peace and security in the region and throughout the world, we feel that we must respond to three demands on three fronts.

First, we need to strengthen security and stability throughout the country, find rapid solutions to the problem of refugees and facilitate their return. Secondly, we have to reinforce this support by ensuring a minimum of economic and social development, which guarantees security and the return to normalcy in Afghanistan. Thirdly, we have to strengthen popular participation in the context of democratic transformation in the Afghan society. We also have to set up the constitutional institutions that will guarantee the qualitative leap that will lead to the final exit from the long dark tunnel that has been imposed on the Afghan people.

In the last six months, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has taken a number of important measures to meet the challenges. With regard to the primary challenge, the International Security Assistance Force was created. It has acted very effectively and efficiently in ushering in positive results in Kabul, and these results must also extend to the whole of Afghanistan. Furthermore, these developments lead the international community, in particular the Security Council, to reinforce, more than at any previous time, these forces along with the role of the United Nations. This should be done while supporting the Afghan Government politically and providing it with the financial and technical assistance it needs in order to meet the desired objectives.

With regard to the second challenge, the humanitarian situation, the Secretary-General's report indicates that despite the progress achieved in planning and executing the mission of UNAMA and in encouraging the national Afghan potential, the humanitarian crisis is still great. Furthermore, the financing offered by the donor parties has been uneven. Actually, the flow of resources, as reflected in the report, has been reduced considerably since April. This has led to deep complications in the implementation of the programmes and has affected those which meet the most urgent needs throughout the country.

These two operations are accompanied by positive steps for guaranteeing the practice of democracy, political reform and respect for human rights. That is the third point I mentioned in my statement. This programme must be serious and legitimate to succeed. Furthermore, we should not forget the difficult circumstances which the Afghan people have had to face. Reinforcing institutions necessarily requires ensuring security for this society and putting an end to its suffering as a result of wars, famine and poverty. We also have to realize a minimum level of honourable living, of education and learning.

The question of Afghanistan and its developments has been on the agenda of Islamic summits and ministerial conferences. The most recent Islamic ministerial conference, which was held in Khartoum last month, adopted a decision that Afghanistan should regain its empty seat in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and emphasized the support for the legitimate Government, under the presidency of Mr. Hamid Karzai, the head of the Afghan State, in its constructive efforts to reinforce peace and security throughout the country, along with comprehensive and lasting development.

I wish to say once more, in the name of the OIC, that the OIC continues to praise the tireless, sincere,

outstanding and exceptional efforts carried out by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi as the head of UNAMA. These efforts will help end the Afghan tragedy and will enable the Afghans to play the positive and effective role that they deserve in the international community.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Denmark. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and make her statement.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the countries belonging to the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.

Let me start by expressing the gratitude of the European Union to Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi for his briefing today and for his outstanding work to promote the process of peace and prosperity in Afghanistan.

The European Union welcomes the outcome of the Emergency Loya Jirga and the election of the head of State, Mr. Hamid Karzai. The Emergency Loya Jirga process, including the regional and district-level elections, demonstrated eagerness for involvement in the democratization process of Afghans throughout the country. We especially welcome that women represented a strong voice in the process.

The European Union strongly deplores the tragic assassination of the Vice-President of the transitional Government of Afghanistan, Haji Abdul Qadir, on 6 July 2002. We urge the transitional Government of Afghanistan to conduct a thorough investigation of the assassination, and we call upon the Afghan people not to let this tragic event disrupt the restoration of Afghanistan or undermine the peace process.

While much has been achieved in the first six months since the Bonn meeting, significant challenges remain. One relates to the lack of security, which continues to be a primary concern for both the Afghan people and the international organizations working in Afghanistan. As a contribution to ensuring security, member States of the European Union continue to play a key role in the deployment of the International Security Assistance Force.

Another important challenge is making the newly established institutions work in an efficient manner and to expand their influence to the provinces. The transitional Government of Afghanistan has a main responsibility for ensuring progress on these and many other important issues during the second stage of the Bonn process. The European Union will continue its political and financial support to enable the transitional Government to play its role.

The European Union has recently appointed Mr. Francesc Vendrell, as the next European Union Special Representative for Afghanistan, to succeed Mr. Klaus-Peter Klaiber. His appointment is the sign of our sustained support for the political process and the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The overall goal of the European Union's cooperation with Afghanistan is the full implementation of the Bonn Agreement. The end goal should be the establishment of a broad-based, gender-sensitive, multi-ethnic and fully representative Government. Accepting human rights and the rule of law as a guiding principle is a fundamental demand on any Government. The Afghan parties have declared their intention in this regard in the Bonn Agreement. Afghanistan has ratified the main international human rights instruments.

The European Union has a long-term commitment to assist in the creation of an Afghan State that respects human rights, including women's rights and the rule of law. We support the efforts on the ground by the United Nations high representative for human rights.

The Bonn Agreement called on the international community and relevant agencies, especially the United Nations, to assist the Afghan Interim Administration and its successors in tackling the production and processing of drugs. The European Union welcomes the steps Afghanistan has taken so far in this respect and remains committed to working with Afghanistan to combat this serious problem. The next step in the Bonn Agreement is the establishment of a constitutional commission. The European Union calls on the transitional Government of Afghanistan to give sufficient impetus to the work of the commission once it is established. Work will soon be initiated in preparation for the elections scheduled for 2004. We welcome the Special Representative's information about close United Nations involvement in the election preparations.

The European Community and its member States are committed to contributing substantially to the development of Afghanistan. More than 500 million euros have already been programmed for disbursement in 2002. The European Union will continue to remind international donors of the urgent need to deliver the development assistance already pledged. The European Union will encourage the allocation of development aid in a way that will strengthen the role of the central Government, while at the same time ensuring that a visible peace dividend soon reaches the population as a whole. The national development budget will soon be presented by the Afghan Administration. The European Union strongly encourages all donors to provide assistance within that framework. We note this year's lack of funds for recurrent costs, and urge donors to consider ways to fill the gap, in particular by rapid disbursement of funds already pledged.

The European Union welcomes the return of a large number of refugees to Afghanistan. At the same time, we are concerned that the returnees have not received the international support they need to ensure their sustainable reintegration. It is crucial for the international community to step up efforts, including by supporting local communities. At the same time, the various Afghan parties must ensure that humanitarian assistance can be safely and effectively delivered.

Just over six months ago, the foundation of the transition process was laid in Bonn. A few months is not much time, after more than 23 years of warfare and strife, but events have proven that, when the Afghan people's thirst for peace is coupled with resolve and with the convergence of neighbouring countries and other international partners, a lot can be achieved. Despite the enormity and complexity of the challenges, there is now, at last, a real chance for the Afghan people and the international community to bring life back to normal in Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Pamir (Turkey): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of July. We wish you every success. I extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2002/737) describing the present situation in Afghanistan. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Brahimi, for his briefing today, and to commend him and his colleagues for their efforts in trying to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Turkey has already aligned itself with the statement just made by Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to highlight some aspects of our assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan. Following the successful leadership of the United Kingdom, Turkey assumed command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as of 20 June 2002, and has established a harmonious working relationship with the Afghan authorities as part of its efforts to implement the objectives of the international community in Kabul and the surrounding areas. The situation in and around Kabul is generally calm. The city is beginning to thrive, with increased commercial and social activity. ISAF has been well received by the local community. At the request of the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Wardak, the ISAF commander has decided to increase ISAF's joint patrolling activity with the Afghan police. Nevertheless, the security situation still requires our full attention. The assassination of Haji Abdul Qadir, Vice-President and Public Works Minister in the Transitional Administration, on 6 July 2002 in Kabul, has brought to the fore the necessity of enhanced coordination between intelligence organizations and internal security institutions. To that end, ISAF has proposed the formation of a working group composed of officials from the relevant institutions.

Afghanistan and the international community are faced with important tasks and challenges. Creation of a genuine national army to serve the interests of the entire Afghan nation should continue to retain our particular attention. Several nations, including Turkey, as well as ISAF, are willing to continue to provide assistance in the formation and training of such an army. While national efforts are under way to train individual Afghan battalions, we believe setting up an overall institutional structure and devising command and control arrangements for a new national army are matters of great urgency.

In order to help the Afghan Government in its efforts to restructure and to consolidate its authority, sustained international aid, as called for in resolution 1419 (2002), is essential. Inability to pay salaries on time to police and army officers and to civil servants will not help bring about long-sought stability and security in the

country, a sine qua non for success. The Afghan people displayed tremendous determination and maturity at the Loya Jirga. The international community now owes them its full commitment.

The high rate of return of refugees, which continues unabated, is flooding the city of Kabul and increasing the pressure on already scarce resources. More than a million people are estimated to have returned to the country in the past six months. Experts estimate that the figure will reach 2 million by the end of the year. It is also important to reinforce Government and United Nations efforts to stem the narcotics trade.

There have been a number of references to the need to expand the area of responsibility of ISAF. To envisage going beyond the present mandate of ISAF, which is confined to Kabul and the surrounding areas, would not only call into question the existing conceptual approach with all the particular repercussions that such an expansion would entail, but would also require careful consideration of securing additional contributors and substantial financial and logistical support.

Although the overall security circumstances still pose a challenge, the outlook gives cause for optimism. Thanks to civilian-military cooperation, many projects have already been implemented, and more than 80 are at the planning stage. The transition from relief to development, which is key to sustainable peace and normalcy, can be achieved with a stronger commitment by the international community and by fulfilling the pledges made so far.

Finally, I thank those representatives who have so kindly expressed words of support and confidence with respect to my country's assumption of the lead nation's role in Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your outstanding leadership as President of the Security Council during the past weeks, steering its deliberations to successful results on issues of critical importance.

We listened with keen interest to the briefing given by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi. My delegation commends him for his dedication and competence in handling a daunting task. We have also noted the observations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/737) on the situation in Afghanistan.

During the past month, the international community witnessed some encouraging political events in Afghanistan, such as the successful conclusion of the Emergency Loya Jirga and the inauguration of the Transitional Authority under the presidency of Mr. Hamid Karzai. Such welcome developments are indeed testimony to the fact that Afghanistan is moving forward on the path towards political stability and economic viability, as envisaged in the Bonn Agreement. Those achievements are the culmination of tireless and concerted efforts of the leaders and the people of Afghanistan in particular and of the international community as a whole. In that regard, my delegation warmly congratulates the Afghan people on their wisdom and maturity, demonstrated in the course of launching the new Transitional Administration. We also commend, most notably, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for their indispensable role. As far as ISAF is concerned, my delegation believes that, under the new Turkish command, it will continue to promote security in the coming months.

We are fully aware, however, that the positive developments achieved thus far are only the beginning of a long and difficult process of recovery and stability. The security, economic and humanitarian situation still falls far short of what is needed for the existence of a stable, strong and full-fledged democracy. The recent violent act resulting in the demise of a prominent member of the new Administration reflects the fragility of the political and security environment in Afghanistan. Among the acute challenges facing that nation are building the necessary security and administrative structures and securing the material resources needed for the implementation of the Government's programmes in the health, education and humanitarian fields as well as in other basic areas.

The Republic of Korea, commensurate with its capacity, has been actively participating in the international efforts aimed at the reconstruction and security of Afghanistan. At the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, held in January, we pledged to provide up to $45 million for reconstruction projects in the country over the course of two and a half years, until 2004. In the initial stage of our assistance programme,

the Republic of Korea will have contributed $10 million by the end of this year. In the field of security, my Government will dispatch a military medical team to Kabul later this month and will also provide some items of radio equipment, with a view to assisting in the process of establishing an Afghan national army.

Finally, we believe that the urgency of the situation calls for the sustained engagement of the international community, in close partnership with the Afghan people, to ensure that the ongoing transitional process in Afghanistan will lead to a successful outcome. Thus, the Security Council should remain closely seized of the situation in Afghanistan, especially considering the importance of that country's stability and prosperity to the entire international community.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting, which provides an opportunity for non-members of the Council to comment on the situation in Afghanistan, which remains one of the most vital items on the Council's agenda. I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Ambassador Brahimi, for his comprehensive briefing, which provided us with an in-depth analysis of the recent situation and of the long-term tasks that lie ahead for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and for the international community on the way towards lasting peace in that country.

Ukraine's stance is very much in consonance with what has been said today around this table. Therefore, I shall confine myself to a few remarks on certain points that my delegation considers to be of paramount importance. First of all, I wish to note the significant progress made in the implementation of key elements of the Bonn Agreement, including reconciliation, humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction. Eight months ago, we could not have imagined what has been achieved. Today, the hopes and the plans set out in Bonn have become a reality. Undoubtedly, the international community and the United Nations have achieved much.

My delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the Emergency Loya Jirga, which became the single most significant benchmark in the Bonn process and in the political life of Afghanistan. We are pleased to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Hamid Karzai on his election as the President of the Transitional Administration, and we wish him every success in his important work.

Of course, not everything is going smoothly; much remains to be done. Afghanistan, as many speakers have said today, still faces grave humanitarian challenges and, especially, security problems. I would like to make special reference to the security situation in Afghanistan — in particular outside Kabul — which remains a major concern. That issue should be one of the priorities for the Security Council, for UNAMA, for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and, of course, for the Afghans themselves. Progress on the political, security, recovery and reconstruction tracks is interlinked. Therefore, continuing insecurity in many parts of the country — the assassination of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir, a number of armed attacks and incidents of violence against international aid organizations — entails the risk of impeding progress in the political and reconstruction fields and in humanitarian activities. In fact, this has become a serious challenge to the efforts of the United Nations.

In our opinion, the establishment and the training of a multi-ethnic Afghan national army and police force are critical to the achievement of stability and lasting peace. In that regard, we welcome progress made towards the reform of the security sector, in particular during two special sessions in Geneva. We pay tribute to the efforts of the donors. At the same time, it is clear that, despite the successful training of the new Afghan army and police force, those units will not be able to provide the necessary security in the country for many months to come. We believe that the international community should continue to support the new Government at this critical stage.

We need to think about how the international community could use the experience of ISAF, which plays an important role in ensuring security in Kabul. I wish to take this opportunity to commend Turkey and its predecessor, the United Kingdom, for their able leadership of ISAF; I also hail the tremendous efforts of all other ISAF participants. We are confident that ISAF will continue to provide support for the promotion of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

We are encouraged by the positive achievements in the fields of economic and social development, the health and education sectors and refugee returns. I am pleased to note the active role played by the United Nations in these processes.

My delegation shares the views expressed today that reconstruction, humanitarian relief and development in Afghanistan remain major goals that require international support and United Nations leadership. One of the most important problems is to ensure sufficient funding for activities in all these areas.

It is also of key importance that we should pay increased attention to the implementation of a strategy of the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants, the resolution of the problems of drug production and trafficking and, of course, mine clearance. It is essential to facilitate the extension of the influence and control of the Transitional Administration throughout Afghanistan.

There are many challenges facing us. Still, we are convinced that with the concerted efforts of the international community, UNAMA, ISAF and the Afghans we will succeed in building a new and more stable Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Nepal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): Please accept our congratulations, Sir, on the outstanding manner in which you are presiding over the Security Council this month, and our thanks for convening this timely open debate on Afghanistan.

After 23 years of war and devastation, the violence-battered Afghan people are trying to get back on their feet with international assistance. We appreciate that assistance and urge the international community to sustain its support for Afghanistan to help it make a clear break from past chaos and attain security, stability and progress.

The Bonn Agreement, together with the subsequent Emergency Loya Jirga, has restored relative calm in Afghanistan, but the country is by no means out of the woods. Afghanistan and its Transitional Authority are still wrestling with the remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, who are out to create trouble, the warlords, who are working to advance their own vested agenda, and the deep-seated mutual distrust among tribal groups ready to ignite renewed conflict. At the same time, it has in hand the formidable tasks of building its institutions and ensuring security and better standards of living for its people.

When people have hope they are their own best defence. And people in despair can be their own worst enemies. Having lived through the trauma of war and mayhem for so long, Afghanistan has witnessed a loss of central authority and order, and has seen the erosion of its social fabric, letting parochial interests hold sway and control people's lives. To change this, Afghans must be enabled to believe that this is no longer the case and that better days are ahead for them — by giving them hope and inspiration. This calls for security coverage for all citizens and the availability of critical humanitarian assistance to the refugees, the displaced and the dispossessed, along with prospects for growth and progress.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is providing much-needed security to Kabul. My delegation appreciates what the troop contributors are doing. But we want to warn that a small oasis of security in a vast desert of insecurity is untenable; it is a sure recipe for impending implosion, which can be triggered by a pervasive feeling of exclusion and neglect among people, undermining efforts made with good intentions.

In order not to let this lacuna queer the pitch of a new and frail Government, security coverage should be gradually expanded throughout the land in a manner that the people see as both serious and steady. Demobilizing, disarming and rehabilitating the combatants should be integral to the scheme. Although security must be the responsibility of the Afghan Government itself once domestic military and police forces are trained and deployed, we suggest that the Security Council mount a robust United Nations peacekeeping mission to work alongside ISAF until the local forces are ready to take their positions throughout the country.

Security from fear is as essential as security from want. Nepal applauds the international community for coming to rescue Afghanistan from its dire financial state. However, we are also alarmed and anguished that humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction have been affected by insufficient funding to increase the capacity to process the return of refugees, as well as by

the Government's inability to finance such activities beyond Kabul. This uncertainty will not be helpful in quickly healing Afghanistan's wounds, in stabilizing peace and in nudging sustainable development forward. Nepal therefore calls on the global community not to let Afghanistan down at this critical juncture and to assist it to overcome the ongoing crisis of resources.

We commend the United Nations for assisting Afghanistan to leave its bloody past behind and the Karzai Administration to establish new institutions critical to running the State. While absolutely necessary structures and processes must be set up early on, we must also bear in mind that the social fabric cannot be transplanted and social systems cannot be imposed from outside. The Afghan people themselves will have to evolve institutions and processes best suited for their society that can propel them on the arduous and long trip to modernization.

What outsiders can do, at best, is inspire and help them to find a progressive, functional and acceptable social equilibrium as they move along and encourage them to meet internationally approved fundamental norms of behaviour. The United Nations would be wise not to impose structures and processes that Afghanistan still finds too alien, too unacceptable or too unsustainable.

Finally, we express our profound solidarity with Afghanistan and its people, and we applaud their effort to reclaim peace and rebuild the nation. We also congratulate President Karzai and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Brahimi, for their dedicated work to make Afghanistan a country that is secure, stable, free from terror and engaged in promoting durable peace and development. Nepal is always ready and happy to contribute to that endeavour as best it can.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nambiar (India): Since the last consideration by the Security Council of the situation in Afghanistan, a number of momentous developments have taken place. The first and most positive development has been the successful conclusion last month of the Emergency Loya Jirga, which represents the will of the Afghan people. From the selection of approximately 1,000 delegates from 390 districts of Afghanistan — in particular the selection and activism of some 200 women delegates — through the actual conduct of the Loya Jirga, the progressive evolution of a consensus and, finally, the election of the head of State, approval and appointment of the Transitional Authority of Afghanistan and of other structures, the entire process was carried out in accordance with the agreement reached in Bonn, where the Afghan parties had pledged to move towards a freely elected and constitutional Government. We welcome the outcome of the Emergency Loya Jirga and the election of Hamid Karzai as the President of the transitional Islamic Government of Afghanistan.

The transitional Government, like its predecessor, the Interim Administration, faces the uphill task of rebuilding the Afghan national economy, infrastructure and institutions of governance. It also faces an uncertain security situation in certain parts of the country.

While the international community has every reason to feel satisfied at the remarkable process of transformation in Afghanistan from the totalitarian, unrepresentative and brutal Taliban regime to the multi-ethnic, democratic order represented by the Transitional Administration, we cannot overlook the threats and dangers that could undermine those achievements. The assassination on 6 July of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir, within a month of the Loya Jirga, was a disquieting sign that the forces of instability and extremism continue to cast their dark shadow over Afghanistan and the rest of the region. We strongly condemn this and other incidents. We cannot allow those forces to succeed.

We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Brahimi, for his valuable briefing today. The Secretary-General, in his 11 July report (S/2002/737) on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security refers to the threats to the consolidation of peace and civil government in the country posed by actions of the ex-Taliban and Al Qaeda forces that explicitly oppose the Bonn process, as well as to those posed by the presence of armed factions. The continued regrouping of Al Qaeda and Taliban cadres along Afghanistan's southern and south-eastern borders heavily impinges on the security situation in Afghanistan, as well as on the rest of our region, and is of serious concern to us. What is more worrying is that they continue to receive external support. It would be tragic and downright dangerous for Afghanistan and

for regional and international peace and security if the malevolent and extremist forces manifested in Al Qaeda and the Taliban, and their external support, were allowed to succeed in their efforts.

To meet this challenge, a major element of the institutional reconstruction effort in Afghanistan has to be the development of the country's security structures. It is important that those structures be established as Afghan institutions flowing out of intra-Afghan processes relevant to and targeted at meeting Afghan needs in response to internal and external threats. As a measure of our support to institution-building in Afghanistan, my Government has undertaken the organization and conduct of 12 training courses involving approximately 250 officers of the Afghan police in specialized areas including investigation techniques, logistics, personnel management and general policing duties.

In order to address the multifaceted challenges that it faces today — and this includes the continuing threats from regrouping Al Qaeda and Taliban elements — Afghanistan requires substantial, extensive and long-term international assistance to meet its reconstruction and humanitarian requirements. This would be a process of nation-building to which the international community would have to lend a continuous helping hand.

India is committed to providing extensive humanitarian, project and financial assistance to Afghanistan's reconstruction. As part of our $100 million financial commitment, we transferred $10 million to the Afghan Government as a cash subsidy grant on 10 July 2002. Another $11.5 million is available for project-related assistance. Details are being worked out for the transfer of three Airbus aircraft as a grant to Ariana Airlines. Fifty buses have been provided to the Afghan Government. We have committed an amount of 1 million tonnes of wheat as food aid to Afghanistan. Discussions are on with the World Food Programme to operationalize part of that commitment as high protein biscuits for a school feeding programme in Afghanistan.

We have also provided medical and paramedical teams, extensive medical stores, medical instruments and equipment in various cities of Afghanistan. More than 18 tonnes of material for artificial limbs was sent to set up a camp for amputees in Kabul. Earthquake relief in the form of 10,000 blankets, a substantial number of tents and medical supplies was delivered in April 2002. A computer training centre has been established and is being run in Afghanistan by Indian experts. Skills upgrading for various professionals and Internet access via very small aperture terminals (VSAT) have also been established for the Interim Administration of Afghanistan. In extending our assistance, we have scrupulously adhered to the concept of Afghan ownership and prioritization in designing and implementing programmes for Afghanistan.

One of the bulwarks against destabilizing factors in the Afghan capital has been the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which has performed commendably under difficult circumstances. We wish to commend the Government of the United Kingdom for their successful handling of the ISAF command. We also express our appreciation to the Government of Turkey for agreeing to take over command of ISAF. We wish them all success in their important task of maintaining security in the Kabul area.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to express our strong commendation of Ambassador Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and the team of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for their tireless, imaginative and highly disciplined efforts, which have contributed so significantly to bringing us to this stage in the difficult process of the political stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan. We extend our support to them in the task of furthering the consensus in favour of positive change and of working with the Afghan people in meeting the challenges before them as they move towards the establishment of a freely elected, constitutional and democratic Government in Afghanistan.

I would like to underline my Government's support for, and best wishes to, President Hamid Karzai, to the Transitional Authority and to the people of Afghanistan in their efforts to build and secure for themselves a stable, prosperous and democratic nation. India's interest, and also the interest of all peace-loving peoples around the world, lies in the emergence of a strong, united and independent Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite

him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, I wish to begin by thanking you for having convened this open debate on the situation in Afghanistan, in which not only the Afghan people and the countries neighbouring Afghanistan, but also the whole international community, have an enormous stake. I wish also to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and valuable report on recent developments in Afghanistan.

My Government, which has great interest in the timely and full implementation of the Bonn Agreement, followed closely the successful convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga in Kabul from 11 to 19 June 2002. Despite the enormity of the task, we are pleased that the Afghan people — ably led by the Afghan Interim Administration and benefiting from assistance provided by Afghanistan's neighbours and the international community — were able to bring the process to a successful conclusion.

We believe that the transfer of power from the Interim Administration to the Islamic Transitional Authority constitutes an important step in implementing the Bonn Agreement, and we hope that the other steps ahead will be taken without difficulty. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, skilfully led by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, played an important role in terms of making the necessary preparations and a crucial role in ensuring coordination at the local and international levels. I would like to thank him and his colleagues for the steadfast and relentless efforts they have made thus far and congratulate them on the success thus far achieved.

However, we believe that there is no room for complacency. The Afghan people and their Government are still facing a host of problems that, if unchecked, could disrupt the steadfast and smooth return of the country to peace and stability.

Security remains a cause for concern. There are reports indicating that elements of Al Qaeda and the Taliban are regrouping and presenting growing threats to security in southern and eastern Afghanistan. Terrorist acts such as the one that, regrettably, resulted in the murder of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir may further erode the nascent security in the country. In the meantime, I would like to caution, as we did in the last debate in the Council, that careless military operations in which Afghan innocent people are killed could add to the sense of instability and bring about unwanted results.

Moreover, we are concerned over insecurity in northern Afghanistan, which results mainly from rivalry among local commanders, as well as over reports pointing to attacks on minorities and aid workers in the north. In this respect, we are using our good offices to work with the parties in the region to help resolve the problems.

While we agree that appropriate international security assistance on the ground helps maintain peace in Afghanistan, we believe that the creation of an indigenous Afghan security sector should be expedited by the Afghans and the international community. The Iranian Government has joined in the process and has undertaken, among other things, to train and equip 400 Afghan police officers.

We have thus far fully cooperated with the United Nations in Afghanistan with a view to promoting peace and security in that country, and we reiterate our readiness earnestly to continue our cooperation in this crucial field.

Drug trafficking in Afghanistan is also a security-related issue. It runs counter to the restoration of stability in that country and threatens neighbouring countries. We commend the determination to eliminate poppy crops shown by the Afghan Interim Administration and by those foreign countries that are assisting it in this respect. We encourage the Transitional Authority and the international community to plan ahead for crop substitution projects for the upcoming cultivating season.

The early commencement of Afghanistan's reconstruction and its steady progress could have an important impact on the security situation in various parts of the country. We believe that the successful transfer of power to the Afghan Transitional Authority should further enable members of the international community to expedite the fulfilment of pledges they have undertaken.

My Government, determined to participate in the reconstruction drive, has already started a number of projects, including the construction of a road from the Iranian border to Herat, which is important given the land-locked status of Afghanistan. Legislative and administrative work is also under way to fund a

number of other reconstruction projects in Afghanistan, in keeping with the pledge my country made at the Tokyo Conference. We hope that the cultural, historical and linguistic affinities between Iran and Afghanistan will enable us effectively to contribute to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We hope that the successful rebuilding of that country will reinforce peace and help alleviate the refugee crisis and drug trafficking in the region.

The dramatic slowdown in resource flows for humanitarian and recovery activities, which the Secretary-General refers to in his latest report, is a serious cause for concern. The failure of the international community to address the most urgent needs of Afghanistan could adversely affect the security situation. There is no doubt, either, that the lack of funding available to the Government impairs its ability to extend its presence beyond Kabul. As I said earlier, the whole international community has an important stake in the restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan, and if it fails to shoulder its responsibility, the hard-won achievements of the past eight months could be endangered.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): May I commend you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan, thereby allowing the larger membership of the Organization to express their views on this important subject.

Malaysia follows with keen interest developments in Afghanistan as it embarks on the urgent business of political, social and economic reconstruction. We appreciate the Secretary-General's report and the comprehensive briefing given by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, the Secretary-General's Special Representative on the situation. We join others in paying tribute to Ambassador Brahimi and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their outstanding work.

We hope that, with the help of the international community, the long-suffering people of Afghanistan will move away from the circumstances of the past and the ills that had plagued them, such as warlordism, terrorism and drug cultivation and trafficking, in addition to poverty and other forms of deprivation. The prospects for a permanent peace, which were once elusive, are now no longer remote. They are contingent, of course, on the political will of the people of Afghanistan and the continued and sustained support of the international community.

On the security front, we note the continuing military operations against remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, which have greatly reduced the threat posed by them. However, we are saddened by, and regret very much, the deaths of innocent civilians in a few of these operations. We hope that every effort will be made to avoid such accidents in the future.

On the political front, we are gratified that Afghans, aided by the international community, have taken an important, and indeed critical, step in the political rehabilitation of their war-torn country with the convening of the Loya Jirga, or grand council, a traditional political mechanism that served Afghans well in the past and that is now being put to use to resolve their decades-long conflict. We commend them for their wisdom and success in utilizing this important traditional institution to lay the foundation of national unity, even as they strive to build new and modern ones in the construction of the new Afghanistan.

My delegation offers its sincere congratulations to President Hamid Karzai on his recent election as head of the transitional Government of Afghanistan. We wish him every success. His election, with the overwhelming support of the people of Afghanistan that went beyond his own ethnic group, and the mandate that goes with it reflect the confidence of his people in his leadership and vision. We hope that, notwithstanding the tragic assassination of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir, which we condemn and deeply regret, under President Karzai's inspired leadership, Afghanistan will move steadily ahead, away from the precipice of becoming a failed State to the threshold of becoming a viable, progressive and democratic Islamic State. However, much will depend on the Afghans themselves, even more than the sustained support of the international community.

In that regard, we hope that the recently concluded Loya Jirga will begin the process of empowering the people of Afghanistan by putting the country's future in their own hands. They clearly demonstrated their new-found will and resolve to decide their country's destiny when they overcame the many difficulties, intimidation and coercion and other

impediments that had been put in their way by those who wanted to derail the process, and ensured the successful convening of that all-important Loya Jirga, with the participation of their former King, whose positive role is well acknowledged. The people of Afghanistan and their leaders who took part in the Loya Jirga must be commended for their patriotism, faith in themselves and preparedness to put aside personal and group interests in the larger interests of the Afghan nation. The seeds of national unity that have been planted must be carefully nurtured in the coming months and years.

Despite the hopeful political outlook emanating from the Loya Jirga process, which augurs well for national reconciliation and stability, my delegation shares the concern of many others about the security situation in the country beyond the capital city of Kabul. This is one of the major concerns of President Karzai as he goes about the difficult task of asserting the authority of the central Government in the provinces, which are still very much under the sway of independent-minded and even wayward provincial chieftains.

The role of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which has brought about a visibly improved security environment in Kabul, ought to be extended to the other cities so that they too will benefit from improved security. The Secretary-General has highlighted in his report the many formidable tasks that lie ahead, as well as the prevailing situation of insecurity across the country, and has continued to strongly advocate a limited expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul. We hope the Council will heed the call made by President Karzai, Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Ambassador Brahimi and will seriously consider this pressing issue of security, along with the other equally pressing issues, if the gains that have been achieved so far are to be preserved and built upon. As we respect their judgement, we should respond positively to their recommendation on ISAF, especially when we recognize the continuing threats to Afghanistan's security.

Of course, international support for an expanded ISAF will have to be generated among Member States of the Organization once that decision has been made. Beyond that, there is a need to consider the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force, an idea we ourselves proposed earlier and which the representative of Nepal just reminded me of now. I am confident that there will be support for such a force, including from my own country.

Indeed, the need for security in Afghanistan is a prerequisite for the success of the entire political and economic reconstruction processes. Upon it hinges the success and viability of a host of other programmes and activities, such as delivering humanitarian assistance, repatriating refugees, establishing the nation's institutions and infrastructure, enabling school attendance, reopening local businesses and attracting foreign investment, among others. Security provides the necessary environment for the return of normalcy to Afghanistan after decades of armed conflict. The ready acceptance of a foreign presence should encourage us to expand the international security presence throughout the country so as to buttress the transitional Afghan Government in its efforts to make its presence felt throughout the country and weaken the influence of the ethnic-based warlords. Needless to say, the success of President Karzai and his Government in these efforts will also be our success as supporters of the peace process.

The transitional Government is likely to face a tough 18 months in its efforts to rebuild and bring about durable peace in the country. Many impediments remain that must be overcome. However, in spite of all those impediments, the present situation presents the best opportunity for the people of Afghanistan to resolve their internal conflict once and for all. With the help of a concerned and caring international community, the country can at last look forward to a brighter future.

In addition to a political process that is advancing smoothly, Afghanistan also has a viable economic reconstruction plan firmly on the table. Prospects for political reconciliation have never looked more promising than now. The "spoiler" that could unravel all the concerted international efforts — not to mention the billions of donor dollars already ploughed into the country's rehabilitation programme, is the prevailing insecurity in the rest of the country, which makes the issue of expanding the security umbrella to the other parts of the country one of vital importance, if not urgency, to the success of all these efforts.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank Mr. Brahimi for his briefing on the situation in Afghanistan. Under Ambassador Brahimi's gifted leadership, the United Nations has played an indispensable role, first in brokering a political settlement between the Afghan parties, and secondly in coordinating the international response to the crisis in Afghanistan. Ambassador Brahimi's effective defusing of tensions between the Afghan parties continues to reinforce the fragile but growing peace that exists in Afghanistan today.

The sustained commitment of the international community will be vital to ensure that the people of Afghanistan see tangible benefits from the political process, and that those who would spoil the peace are deterred from doing so. Canada is committed to playing its full part in providing support to the people of Afghanistan in their struggle to rebuild and reform their country in the long term. After decades of war and years of domestic conflict, confidence in civil authority in Afghanistan is a precious and rare commodity. If it is to endure and broaden, Afghans must also see that they are full participants in a fair and open political process.

(*spoke in English*)

We believe that the Loya Jirga in June was a turning point, marking the first time in a generation that political authority passed peacefully from one Afghanistan Administration to the next. We were heartened by the participation of thousands of Afghans throughout the country. We were particularly encouraged by the effective participation of some 200 women delegates in the Loya Jirga itself. We welcome the appointment of three women to positions of authority in the transitional Administration and the appointment of a fourth to head the Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan. This is a very good start. We look to President Karzai and his Administration to ensure that women are included going forward at every level of decision-making and that women benefit fully and equitably from the country's reconstruction.

The restoration of the rule of law and the enjoyment of tangible benefits of peace throughout Afghanistan are key both to breaking the cycle of civil conflict and suffering and to ending the country's use as a terrorist base. We are therefore deeply concerned by reports of serious human rights violations in Afghanistan, including attacks against minorities, women and international humanitarian staff, to which many other speakers here today have also referred. We look to the transitional Administration to bring about respect for international humanitarian and human rights laws in Afghanistan as a priority.

Like others in the international community, we were shocked and saddened to learn of the assassination on July 6 of Vice-President Qadir. We extend our condolences to his family and to the Government and people of Afghanistan for their tragic loss. We welcome the cooperation between the Afghan authorities and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in the investigation of this crime. Those responsible must be brought to justice. Mr. Qadir's murder underscores the need to support the efforts of the Afghan authorities to rebuild the country's security and justice systems.

Canada was the Chair this year of the G-8, and I am pleased to be able to say that the G-8 countries are continuing their work with the Afghan Administration, particularly with respect to security sector reforms and peace-building, as well as reconstruction. G-8 Foreign Ministers met in Whistler, British Columbia, in June and agreed there to make security sector reforms in Afghanistan a special focus of the G-8's work on conflict prevention. It is equally clear that humanitarian assistance is still urgently needed and will be urgently needed for some time. The restoration and maintenance of peace and security is essential if reconstruction and development investments are to endure in the long term.

In her meeting with President Karzai and others earlier this month, Canada's Minister for International Cooperation was apprised of the needs, priorities and concerns of the Afghan authorities. She heard that the international community has been slow for the most part in translating its commitments of assistance into tangible disbursements.

Canada is contributing to the security of Afghanistan through the deployment of some 2,000 Canadian Forces combat personnel as part of Operation Apollo, in the coalition campaign against terrorism. Following the scheduled withdrawal of the 900-strong Canadian 'battle group this summer, Canada will continue to contribute to the coalition campaign through Special Forces and a sizeable sea and air presence.

The return of more than one and a quarter million Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons this year is a sign of hope and determination. The Afghan diaspora, including a sizeable community in Canada, represents a pool of talent and good will that could prove instrumental to the reconstruction effort. However, as they often lack even basic mechanisms of support, returnees remain particularly vulnerable to the difficult circumstances that await them at home. There is a need to effectively link humanitarian and transitional activities so that these returns can be sustained.

The transitional Administration faces a shortfall in its budget of $377 million needed to pay civil servants, security sector personnel and teachers. In recent meetings in Canada, G-8 leaders and Foreign Ministers, as well as G-7 Finance Ministers, have acknowledged the need to translate pledges of support into actual programming in Afghanistan and have undertaken to ensure that donor commitments are delivered without delay. We have therefore announced the $10 million contribution to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which will help defray recurring costs of the transitional Administration and provide for quick-impact projects to demonstrate the benefits of peace to the Afghan people.

Canada has now disbursed or approved a little over $40 million of the $100 million that it pledged in Tokyo. Disbursement of the remaining $60 million will proceed apace. We recognize that we, like others, will have to do better than we have done. Canada will support a broad range of peace-building, security and humanitarian assistance, transitions and reconstruction initiative over the rest of this year.

The needs of Afghanistan are profound and immediate and require more than our rhetoric to address. The Afghan people are counting on the donor community to make good their commitments. And we do all need to do better.

The President: The last speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and make his statement.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): The Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Munir Akram, apologizes that he has not been able to participate personally in this important debate. He has requested that I make this statement on his behalf.

The delegation of Pakistan would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this timely debate on the situation in Afghanistan. We are very happy to see Ambassador Brahimi with us once again. His comprehensive briefing provides the Council with an objective and a clear basis on which to consider the evolving situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan deeply appreciates Ambassador Brahimi's efforts in and for Afghanistan. We assure him of our continued full support and cooperation in the discharge of his challenging and important mandate.

The Secretary-General has observed that the Bonn process is just that: a process, and a long one. We are satisfied that this process has continued to move ahead and that the steps envisaged therein have thus far been implemented in a timely manner. The fact that the Bonn process has remained on track during these six short months is in no small measure due to the energy and the perseverance of Ambassador Brahimi. It is also the accomplishment of the Afghan people. It is Pakistan's hope that this process will continue to advance despite the challenges that are being confronted.

In this context, we welcome the most recent landmarks: the convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga, the establishment of the Afghan transitional Administration and the election of President Hamid Karzai as its head. Pakistan fully supports President Karzai's Government and its efforts to restore peace and stability to Afghanistan, as well as to the region.

The people of Pakistan, who share so much with Afghanistan, also share their hope for a better future. Despite the twists and turns of history, the bonds between the people of Pakistan and the people of Afghanistan remain unbreakable and irrevocable. We will continue to work with our Afghan brothers for the restoration and promotion of peace and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

Despite its resources constraints, Pakistan is trying to do all that it can to help in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. We pledged $100 million for Afghanistan at the Tokyo Conference. Some of the financial assistance has already been extended. The bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan in various fields, including road construction, telecommunications, postal services, media development and power generation is continuing and expanding.

Within the cooperative process initiated by the international community, Pakistan has offered facilities and equipment to train the Afghan army and police, as well as to strengthen Afghanistan's judicial system and narcotics control mechanisms. We have also offered special training in the field of demining.

We fully understand that a priority goal of the international community remains the elimination from Afghanistan of Al Qaeda and related terrorists. Pakistan supports the ongoing operations of the international coalition towards that end. We regret that accidental civilian casualties have occurred and appreciate the corrective efforts undertaken. Pakistan is engaged, with the cooperation of the United States and other coalition members, in preventing the escape of Al Qaeda and Taliban elements across the border into Pakistan, and in tracking and capturing terrorist elements who may have been able to cross the border. We have had considerable success in this endeavour: hundreds of Al Qaeda and Taliban elements have been captured. The effectiveness of our operations is obviously indispensable for the success of the coalition's operations within Afghanistan. We hope this operation will be successfully completed in the near future.

In the war against terrorism, it is Pakistan that, after Afghanistan, has made the greatest sacrifices in blood and tears. Last week, in one operation alone in our border region, Pakistan lost 10 men, adding to an equal number of earlier casualties in clashes with terrorist elements seeking to cross the frontier. Despite these sacrifices and some anticipated domestic difficulties, President Musharraf and his Government have not flinched or faltered in supporting the campaign to root out Al Qaeda and other terrorist elements from Afghanistan and the entire region.

Pakistan's continuing contribution and cooperation have been extended and sustained despite the subversive endeavours of our eastern neighbour to utilize Pakistan's preoccupation with the war against terrorism for its own narrow objectives. Pakistan has been obliged to deploy the largest part of its forces along its eastern border and along the United Nations-supervised Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir to respond to the threat of war which has been held out against Pakistan. Yet, even at the height of the eastern tensions a few weeks ago, when war clouds hovered over South Asia, Pakistan did not move its forces engaged in the anti-terrorist operations along the Afghanistan border. As soon as the eastern threat subsided somewhat, Pakistan went ahead with the planned operational reinforcements along the western frontiers.

Indeed, the Pakistan armed forces are engaged in a comprehensive operation to evoke full local cooperation in Pakistan's tribal areas in tracing and eradicating any Al Qaeda and other terrorist elements, including, through steps to enhance the road and communication networks and to implement related development projects.

While we, in Pakistan, share the hopes and dreams of the Afghan people, we also share some of their most serious concerns. These concerns have been voiced repeatedly by Secretary-General Kofi Annan as well as by Ambassador Brahimi. Everyone acknowledges that security is key to promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, to enabling the delivery of humanitarian relief to displaced and destitute people in Afghanistan, to encouraging the early return of Afghan refugees and to implementing plans for the economic and social reconstruction of Afghanistan. Without adequate security there can be no peace, or stability, or prosperity. It must be admitted that it has not been possible so far to offer conditions of security to all parts of Afghanistan. Several regions are visibly insecure, infested with bandits and outlaws. Tens of thousands of fighters remain under arms across the country. Most of them are loyal to various regional, tribal or factional leaders. Such regional influentials appear to have consolidated their grip on power in recent months, denying the Transitional Administration in Kabul the authority to maintain order or raise revenues.

We welcome the determined efforts being made by President Karzai to assert the writ of the central Government and wish him continued success in that important endeavour. According to various reports, insecurity, especially in the north and the east, is hampering the provision of relief and the return of refugees. The recent barbarous attacks against relief workers illustrate the nature of the environment. Reports of continued fighting between rival factions in various provinces are also cause for concern. The tragic assassination of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir was a vivid and tragic indicator of the fragility of the security situation, even in Kabul. Pakistan once again expresses its sorrow at the untimely demise of Haji Abdul Qadir, a patriotic Afghan whose friendship for

our people was abundant and consistent. His death is a severe loss for Afghanistan, for the Transitional Administration and for the effort to secure orderly implementation of the political process of balanced governance envisaged in the Bonn Agreement.

We have before us two alternatives to address the issue of security. The first is to expand the size of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and extend its mandate at least to the other major cities of Afghanistan. That option, which has been favoured by Ambassador Brahimi and the Secretary-General, and for which Mr. Karzai has also pleaded, deserves renewed consideration in the context of the evolving security environment in Afghanistan.

The second route, of creating an indigenous Afghan army and police force, will no doubt be indispensable in the long term to provide the Afghan central Government with the ability to effectively rule the country. However, the process of constituting the national army and police force, a process to which Pakistan is actively contributing, will take time. And time may not be available to ensure that centrifugal forces do not once again disrupt the process of providing effective security to all parts of Afghanistan and fully restoring the unity and territorial integrity of the country. In that context, the ethnic resentments and tribal rivalries which have recently become more vocal and visible in practice indicate the shortcomings of this option as a means to deal with immediate security problems. If the expansion and extension of ISAF is not considered feasible immediately, it is incumbent on the Security Council and on the members of the international coalition operating in Afghanistan to consider other effective modalities to provide security to all regions of the country. We believe that such alternative modalities can be established, even on an ad hoc basis, to ensure credible conditions of security for all parts of Afghanistan.

Pakistan attaches singular importance to the commitment in the Bonn Agreement to non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. Pakistan has scrupulously observed this injunction. We believe that other immediate neighbours of Afghanistan are also living up to this commitment. It would be unfortunate, however, if Afghanistan were now destabilized by the continuing and blatant interference of a country which is not Afghanistan's immediate neighbour, but which sees new opportunities to fish in troubled waters as a means to advance its tactical or strategic objectives. That country does not seem to care whether its partisan contribution erodes the process of restoring peace and stability to Afghanistan as envisaged in the Bonn process. We trust that the Security Council will give adequate consideration to ending such attempts to destabilize Afghanistan and to poison its relations with one of its immediate neighbours. Indeed, endeavours by any external Power to sponsor its favourites in Afghanistan — and, much worse, to use them against other regional countries — must be opposed and eliminated, once and for all, by the international community. It is time to build a comprehensive structure of security for Afghanistan.

While we welcome the progress made in the Bonn process, we must not forget the Tokyo process. Insecurity should not contribute to donor fatigue. Donor vigour should complement security enhancement. The international community must fulfil the pledges made at the Tokyo donors Conference, as well as at subsequent meetings, in order to set the people of Afghanistan firmly on the path of development.

We agree with the concerns that Ambassador Brahimi recently shared with donors in Geneva. Without firm and sustained economic and humanitarian support, it will be difficult for the Transitional Administration to provide relief or reconstruction to all parts of Afghanistan. While security is essential for the provision of such relief and reconstruction, the revival of economic activity and of employment opportunities is equally vital to restore a climate of normalcy and to create incentives for restoring peace and for supporting the Bonn political process. Donors must continue to support the Afghan Administration and to consolidate the progress achieved thus far. This window of opportunity may not be open indefinitely.

In addition to donor assistance, Afghanistan's economic and social reconstruction can be significantly advanced through regional cooperation. We welcome the recent initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, to promote economic cooperation among Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, as well as with other Asian members of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Pakistan believes that implementation of the recent agreement concluded among Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan on a gas pipeline could provide significant revenues and employment opportunities for Afghanistan, within broader

progressive and cooperative regional development. We urge the international community to extend its support to a broader process of cooperative regional development that can help to foster peace and security as well as greater prosperity in Afghanistan and the entire region.

We also urge the international community to maintain its support for humanitarian relief and refugee repatriation in Afghanistan, together with the assistance being provided for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Pakistan is gratified that more than 1 million Afghan refugees have returned home in recent months. We hope that the trend of voluntary refugee return will continue. We also hope that the financial shortfall facing the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other international organizations will soon be overcome. We certainly hope that the international community will not forget the more than 2 million Afghan refugees who still remain in my country. Pakistan has been supporting millions of Afghan refugees for the past two decades from its own meagre resources and without any appreciable assistance from the outside world. Those refugees, now more than ever, deserve adequate and sustained support from the international community to enable them to return to their homes in security and honour.

The people of Afghanistan and the international community have come a long way in the past six months. Once at war with itself, Afghanistan is now on the road to peace and progress. The international community owes a debt to those who have made that possible, not least to Ambassador Brahimi and his collaborators in Afghanistan. However, there can be no room for complacency. The road to peace and stability in Afghanistan is littered with hurdles and challenges. The Secretary-General has observed that, as the peace process moves forward, there are bound to be new problems and perhaps even setbacks. Nevertheless, we must continue to work together on all fronts with patience and determination to ensure that peace is consolidated and stability achieved. That will be no easy task. It has been said that those who fail to learn from history are bound to repeat it. We must not let that happen in Afghanistan. The international community must not walk away from Afghanistan after the task of eradicating terrorism is completed.

The President: The representative of Afghanistan has asked me to express, on his behalf, his thanks for the condolences offered on the death of Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir.

I should now like to give the floor to the Special Representative to take up any points on which he might wish to comment.

Mr. Brahimi: It has been a long day for the Council, and I shall be very brief. I should just like to reiterate the expression of my appreciation, thanks and gratitude to all those who participated in this debate. Their statements confirm the international community's continued interest in supporting Afghanistan, and that is something we very much welcome.

It was a great pleasure to see Mrs. Ogata, a frequent visitor to several areas of Afghanistan, a high-ranking international official and now a distinguished representative of her country. Her statement very much reflected her Government's strong interest, and her own strong interest, in Afghanistan.

Again, I am grateful to the representatives of neighbours of Afghanistan and other countries in the region for together realizing the importance of helping to reinforce peace and security in Afghanistan. I believe that they now share our view that the conflict in Afghanistan, if it continues, will not be confined within that country's borders. By the same token, I think that peace, if it is established and reinforced in Afghanistan, will spread its benefits to the neighbouring countries and beyond in the region.

I should like to assure the Council that, under the guidance of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations will continue to serve the people of Afghanistan to the best of our ability. We think that the Afghan people deserve that help, that interest and that support, and we count on the Council and its members — as well as on all Members of the United Nations — to stay the course and to do what it takes to bring Afghanistan to the point of no return from peace to conflict.

The President: I thank the Special Representative very warmly for his presence here today, for his important message to the Council and for those concluding remarks. We should like him to ensure that the gratitude and admiration of Council members is conveyed back to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and to the whole family of United Nations agencies on the ground.

There are no further speakers left on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.